

[English]

FISHERIESREPORT OF FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL AGREEMENT RELATING TO
FRASER RIVER FISHERY VIOLATIONS

Mr. Ted Miller (Nanaimo-Alberni): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. A confidential report submitted to the British Columbia government, and leaked to the press this week, indicates that the Fraser River is nothing more than a sewer channel through which salmon must migrate. Also the report suggests that there is a gentleman's agreement between the federal government and the British Columbia government which calls on the federal government not to enforce the Fisheries Act under its jurisdiction. Is there indeed a gentleman's agreement between the federal government and the province of British Columbia to turn a blind eye to violations of the Fisheries Act, and if not, why have there not been more charges laid against the 200 suspected polluters in the lower Fraser River?

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Madam Speaker, if there is a gentleman's agreement, it is to avoid double permits being issued.

The fact is that in some cases we have laid charges in spite of the fact that a provincial permit was given. If my memory is accurate, one of our own harbour commissions was charged in the last few days. I was somewhat surprised by reports of the content of this report which was ordered by the provincial minister of the environment whose predecessor, by the way, opposed the enactment of amendments to the Fisheries Act about three years ago.

I must confess that at times I find, in the name of avoiding double permitting, some provincial governments are a bit lax in the enforcement of the Fisheries Act. I gave instructions some weeks ago to my officials to be much more vigilant than they have been in the past.

REQUEST FOR MEETING BETWEEN FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL
MINISTERS

Mr. Ted Miller (Nanaimo-Alberni): Mr. Minister, the fact of the matter is that 40 per cent—

Some hon. Members: Order, order.

Mr. Miller: Madam Speaker, despite not getting the parliamentary procedure right, the fact of the matter is that 40 per cent of British Columbia salmon production takes place in the Fraser River. The minister is daily imposing more and more restrictions on sports and commercial fishermen, yet officials turn a blind eye to violations of the Fisheries Act, and the resources are depleting.

In view of the report, is the minister now prepared to initiate a meeting between the British Columbia minister of the environment, his colleague, the Minister of the Environment, and himself, to deal with the real problem of fish and stock depletion in the Fraser River before the fishermen of British Columbia cannot make incomes from the industry?

Oral Questions

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Madam Speaker, if one compares the legislation which was put on the books three years ago with what existed before, there has been very, very important progress.

Some hon. Members: Enforce it.

Mr. LeBlanc: Some members opposite are shouting "enforce it". I would be glad to open the files; I do not know how many complaints there are about works we have prevented, dredging operations we have interrupted, and charges that have been laid. If the hon. member wants me to stop all industrial activity on the Fraser River, then I ask him to come out publicly and say so. There is no doubt that there has been a loss of fish habitat over many, many years. We are trying to push this back; we are trying to prevent damage. But if the hon. member wants to stop total industrial activity, I wish he would say so.

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● (1450)

INFORMATIONPRINTING AND DISTRIBUTION OF PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH ON
THE CONSTITUTION

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister who last Wednesday told the House that the Liberal party, and not the taxpayers of Canada, would be paying for the 25,000 copies of his constitutional speech, which the Prime Minister's office instructed the Canadian Unity Information Office to draw up and which are currently being sent out by the Liberal caucus and by the National Liberal Party. In view of the fact that following the Prime Minister's statement, the Prime Minister's press secretary and the publicity director of the Liberal Party of Canada stated that the Prime Minister was wrong and that, in fact, 100 per cent of the cost will be borne by the taxpayers of Canada and not by the Liberal party, what is the truth?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, I am glad I gave the hon. member the answer I did during the question period last week, which was the correct answer. After the question period I was informed that I did not have the facts. I tried to set them straight, but apparently my first answer was the correct one; so I refer the hon. member to my first answer.

USE OF TAX DOLLARS TO MEET COST

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe): Madam Speaker, how does the Prime Minister justify using the Canadian Unity Information Office as a \$23 million propaganda machine for the Liberal party? Will the Prime Minister give Canadian taxpayers the assurance that in the future the Canadian Unity Information Office and the taxpayers' money will not be used to promote the views of one man, on a matter which is still before Parliament?